



Kirk Miller <samkm@sammt.org>

School Administrators of Montana Input on Tax Cuts and Jobs Act

1 message

Kirk Miller <samkm@sammt.org>

Thu, Nov 16, 2017 at 12:53 PM

To: Tripp Gianforte - McKemey <tripp.mckemey@mail.house.gov>, Will Gianforte - Carracho <will.carracho@mail.house.gov>

Cc: "samkm@sammt.org" <samkm@sammt.org>

Bcc: Brenda Krueger <b_krueger@cfmthschools.net>, "DAcommittee@sammt.org" <DAcommittee@sammt.org>, Jules Waber <jwaber@powellcountymt.gov>

Dear Representative Gianforte, Legislative Director Will Carracho, and Education/Tax Legislative Aid Tripp McKemey,

My name is Kirk Miller, and I'm the Executive Director of School Administrators of Montana (SAM). SAM represents the interests of our 1020 school and district administrators and leaders in Montana. I'm emailing to let Representative Gianforte know that SAM strongly opposes the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act because of the devastating impact it will have on public school students and communities across our state.

Our opposition to the tax reform is driven by two specific provisions which will negatively impact our nation's public schools.

First, this legislation would incentivize upper-middle-class and wealthy Americans to educate their children in private schools by providing them with a tax break as they can now utilize 529 accounts for private K-12 education. These drastic changes would enable anyone, regardless of their wealth, to put aside significantly more dollars for use at private schools, at a greater expense to taxpayers and schools.

Second, we are also deeply concerned by changes to the State and Local Tax Deduction. Eliminating SALT will hurt more than 43 million taxpayers from all 50 states and across all income brackets. It will also hurt the ability of state and local governments, including Montana school districts, to fund essential services such as public education. State and local funding accounts for about 90 percent of funding for K-12 schools, meaning that any reduction in state revenue—which will likely happen when any state or local tax is perceived as a double tax when it cannot be deducted—will almost certainly lead to cuts in public education. Over time, it is likely that a change in this tax provision would erode funding for education at a level deep enough to mirror a direct cut in federal, state and/or local funding.

We urge Representative Gianforte to oppose this bill, which has the potential to decimate education funding for our state.

Respectfully,

Kirk J. Miller, EdD

Kirk J. Miller

Executive Director
School Administrators of Montana
900 No. Montana Avenue, Suite A-4
Helena, MT 59601
406-442-2510
406-442-2518 Fax
<http://www.sammt.org>

